SPECIAL EMERGENCY ISSUE

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WRL NEWS

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Published by the War Resisters League 339 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012, U.S. branch of the War Resisters International, a pacifist organization with affiliates in 53 countries. Ralph DiGia, Administrative Secretary; David McReynolds, Field Secretary; Jim Peck, Editor. *No. 153*

S.O.S.

"This evening on WBAI news, I heard of the theft of your membership lists and experienced a feeling of personal loss," wrote Carol Greenberg, a New York WRLer, in a letter accompanying a $25 check. "Perhaps I never realized how much I depend on you to keep me informed, how much it helps to know you're there. *WITHOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP LISTS, YOU COULDN'T REACH ME, NOT EVEN TO SAY 'HELP' AND IT WAS AS IF THE CONTACT WITH YOU WERE FOREVER BROKEN* (italics ours)."

Help us to restore "the contact" with our members and friends in this emergency situation. If you know any other WRLers in your area, tell them to send in their names and addresses (with zip code) to our new headquarters: *339 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012.*

WRL WRECKED

These photos were taken by Maury Englander the morning after a group of persons broke into the WRL office, wrecked the premises and stole the files. Above, WRL Chairman Igal Roodenko inspects the irreparably-smashed addressing machine which had cost $500. Behind him is the ransacked file cabinet for address stencils.

WHAT HAPPENED ON MAY 9

by David McReynolds

On the night of May 9 at about 7:30 p.m., Ralph DiGia and Peter Kiger left the WRL office at 5 Beekman Street. Next morning, Ricky Shuldiner came in at 10 a.m. to start work and found the premises a total shambles. Literature cabinets had been stripped and their contents hurled across the floor. File cabinets had been dumped and piles of papers kicked around the room. The addressing and mimeograph machines had been smashed. Typewriters had been toppled off their stands.

But most damaging of all, the entire membership file and all mailing stencils had been stolen.

This was the second and most serious onslaught as the League prepared to move to its new headquarters at 339 Lafayette Street. On April 28 a mail bag containing the weekend mail for all the 10th floor peace groups—including possibly as much as $2000 in cash and checks—was stolen from in front of the WRL office door. *If you sent in any checks, literature orders or other communications which might have arrived around the weekend of April 26-27, they were lost in the mail robbery.*

That same morning an expensive IBM typewriter was stolen from the National Mobilization office across the hall. A few days later, there was evidence of an unsuccessful attempt to unscrew one of the locks on the WRL office door. However, the League was not prepared for the total assault which took place May 9.

There is yet no evidence of who raided the office. There is no reason to suspect any particular group, although the raid bears the marks of actions rightist groups have taken in other areas of the country. In the 46 years of the War Resisters League this is the first time such an attack has occurred.

The police did not seem particularly concerned when informed, making only a cursory inspection. The press was even less interested—no reporters came to check out the story. NBC filmed the wreckage but killed any showing of the film. CBS called to say they were coming with a TV crew and then called back to cancel. The New York *Times* buried the story, with five short paragraphs on an inside page.

WRL chairman Igal Roodenko commented: "The work of the WRL is obviously even more effective than we had realized. The attackers apparently felt that pacifism is still dangerous." The staff and officers of the League met shortly after the raid, arranged for tighter security, and announced that the work of the League will continue. During World War 2 the WRL duplicated its files often and moved the duplicates out of the office. That practice will be started as soon as the new list is compiled.

WRL staff estimates the damage to machinery at $1000 and the damage resulting from theft of the files at several thousand additional dollars—so contributions ARE needed.

Luckily, the raiders did not find the boxes of envelopes containing our daily receipt slips which, when gone over piece-by-piece, will make it possible to partially reconstruct the mailing list. This tedious procedure is already under way and—thanks to the many volunteer typists who have offered their services—we have been able to prepare envelopes in which to mail this issue of WRL NEWS.

However, since it has to be mailed first class (another additional expense), we must limit it, for reasons of weight, to four pages, instead of six—thus eliminating two special articles on the Gandhi centennial prepared by Henry Bass of the Atlanta Workshop in Nonviolence and Bob Eaton of A Quaker Action Group. We hope to carry these in the subsequent issue—and also to include our new literature list which had been slated for this mailing.

ENROLLMENT BLANK

Send to War Resisters League
339 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012

IMPORTANT—With this particular issue, this blank is inserted, not just for new applicants, but for individuals who were on our mailing list but whose names and addresses we no longer have. If you fall into this latter category, be sure to fill it out and send it in.

The War Resisters League is important because, by union, it relieves courageous and resolute individuals of the paralysing feeling of isolation and loneliness, and in this way gives them moral support in the fulfillment of what they consider their duty. The existence of such a moral elite is indispensable for the preparation of a fundamental change in public opinion, a change which, under present-day circumstances, is absolutely necessary if humanity is to survive.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Princeton, New Jersey
August 10, 1953

WAR IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY
I THEREFORE AM DETERMINED NOT TO SUPPORT ANY KIND OF WAR, INTERNATIONAL OR CIVIL, AND TO STRIVE FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL THE CAUSES OF WAR

Date .....

Signature .....

_____I support this statement and wish to enroll as a member of the WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE.

_____Although not prepared to become a League member, I want to support the work of the League.

_____Without obligation, please send me more information about the League's activities.

_____I was on the mailing list, but since I did not get this issue in the regular mailing, I assume my name and address have been lost.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... Zone ..... State .....

Occupation ..... Age .....

FIRST INTERNATIONAL PACIFIST CONFAB IN U.S.

The 13th triennial conference of the War Resisters International at Haverford College (Haverford, Pa.) August 25-31 will be the first international pacifist get-together to be held in the U.S. The War Resisters League, in cooperation with other WRI affiliates in North America will act as host.

Liberation and Revolution—Gandhi's Challenge

The first four days of the conference will concentrate on a discussion of nonviolence in relation to the problem of social revolution and liberation movements. Outstanding speakers have been invited, from Latin America, Asia, Europe, Africa and the United States. In addition to the main presentations and discussions, there will be working parties meeting each evening on the following topics: Student and Youth movements, Japan/US Security Treaty, Middle East, NATO and Warsaw Pact—European security, Africa, Latin America, Problems of minorities.

Business Conference

The second half of the WRI Conference is limited to members of the various sections of the WRI. Any member of the WRL may attend these sessions, within the limits of space. The WRI business conference will discuss the world pacifist movement, the role of the WRI, its future structure and program for the years immediately ahead. The new WRI Council is also elected at this time. The business session will also act on any resolutions or action programs that have been agreed on by the working parties.

Languages: English, French, Spanish, German.
Cost: Conference fee $15. Room and board $10 per day. There is an absolute limit of 200 on the number who can be accomodated, so your reservations should be sent at once, along with the $15 conference fee, to: War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y. 10012.

Because of the international conference, WRL's regular national conference will NOT be held this year.

NAVY MAN WILLS INSURANCE TO WRL

"This is to inform you that I, Roger L. Priest, U.S. Navy serial number B72-69-03 of 4542 Orange Grove Drive, Houston, Texas, stationed presently at the Office of Navy Information, Pentagon, Washington, D.C., have on this day, February 5, 1969, designated the War Resisters League the sole benficiary of all service-connected life insurance and death gratuity in the event of my death during the time of my military service."

So stated a letter from Priest with a PS: "You can publicize this action or get additional information from me if you so choose."

His letter goes on: "It is my earnest desire that in the event of my death the sum of money received be put to use in some programs that will curtail the militarism that is so rampant in this society, the militarism that has made 'Pax Americana' possible, the militarism that today murders the Vietnamese people for their gallant struggle for freedom and commits oppressive acts against the black man and the young here at home."

Elaborating on the letter, Priest, who edits a newsletter for servicemen in I. F. Stone style, said:

"You can expect some hassles from the Brass if you take this kind of action. But don't let them blow your mind with their petty threats and just plain outright lies. I was interrogated for 45 minutes because I put down WRL as my 'unusual' beneficiary. My division officer threatened me with a dishonorable discharge plus five years in jail if I belonged to any subversive group, an investigation by Naval Intelligence and a note home to my parents informing them of my action.

"But if you are committed to an end of the struggle in Vietnam and a repudiation of all that made it possible—then join us, and encourage others to do the same.

"The idea is to change your personnel file and to designate as a beneficiary for all service-connected life insurance and death gratuity either a peace or a resistance group." '

Washington *Post* Columnist Nicholas von Hoffman devoted his entire column on March 24 to Roger Priest. The column concludes: "Roger, his research, his values and his activities bring our military and foreign policies to a special kind of domestic crisis. Do we continue to impress young men into the army to fight a war they abominate? If we do, what do we do with them? Send them to the front and hope they get killed to enrich the War Resisters League? Are men so profoundly disaffected reliable soldiers? Do we courtmartial Roger, put him in the Presidio where he can attempt suicide like the other prisoners out there?

"A somewhat cynical solution to the problem was provided by a well-known Washington columnist who may not want his name used: 'When are we going to learn,' he asked with a sigh, 'what the British and Romans learned? And that is you can't fight imperialist wars with conscript armies. You have to use mercenaries.' "

How One GI Feels About WRL

Parris A. Boyd wrote from Fort Carson, Colorado: "The WRL has been a big inspiration to me, mainly by assuring me that I am not alone in my abborrence of all violence. I have applied for discharge on grounds of conscientious objection and Saturday a week ago, I refused to carry a weapon for the first time."

Father of Dead GI Sends $50

Soon after his son, Bill, was killed in action in Vietnam, Gail Olson, who runs a music store in Russell, Pa., sent WRL a $50 contribution and ordered a sizeable amount of literature for distribution. He enclosed a reprint of Bill's last letter to his wife and of a letter about Bill from the head track coach at Eisenhower High School.

APRIL ACTION IN NEW YORK

VIGIL AT FOLEY SQUARE

MARCH ON SIXTH AVENUE

In more than 40 cities, thousands of persons participated in April Action, initiated by a pacifist coalition group based in Philadelphia.

Photos on this page by Bradford Lyttle

SUMMER SEMINARS

by Igal Roodenko

If, during the past four years, you had attended a seminar of the Institute for the Study of Nonviolence (in and near Carmel, Cal.) you would have found Ira Sandperl and Joan Baez busy and effectively standing on its head a lot of conventional thinking. You would have discovered that the "establishment" is not only—or even not mainly—a bunch of greedy men and institutions: it is as much a habit of sloppy thinking. An example: many a young man worries himself sick trying to fit into his draft board's definition of a conscientious objector instead of asking his own conscience what *he* is all about.

Nonviolence thus becomes something more than turning the other cheek. It is that kind of understanding of one's personal and social self which makes possible a creative, people-centered approach to the problems around us. It is the finding of other choices to conflict when most people can see only two: subduing the enemy or being subdued. It is removing from our politics the distinction between "we" and "they": we are all "we".

That, at least, is what I got out of my two weeks in Carmel. Since then I've wanted to start such seminars here in the east, and finally organized one in early April. It worked so well that we are planning two more this summer. They will run from June 17-30 and July 17-30, both at Woolman Hill, Deerfield, Mass. The group will be limited to 25 people. Housing and tuition will be $35 per week, with some scholarship help available. Participants will share the cost and preparation of meals.

Further details can be obtained from me at the WRL, 339 Lafayette Street, New York 10012. For the Westcoast program, write to the Institute, P.O. Box 517, Carmel Valley, Calif. 93921. For the southern program, write to Atlanta Workshop in Nonviolence, P.O. Box 7477, Atlanta, Ga. 30309.

IN BRIEF

Columbia University students voted the $200 Joel R. Dean Award for the best teacher of contemporary civilization to Sam Coleman, philosophy lecturer—who is WRL vice chairman. Coleman donated the sum to the League.

* * *

Jim Peck, your editor, represented WRL at the May 12 nationally mobilized mass march in Charleston, South Carolina, to support striking hospital workers. The 2-month-old strike, like the Memphis sanitation workers strike during which Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed, has gained national attention with full support from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

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Carol Andreas, assistant sociology professor at Oakland University (Rochester, Mich.) and active WRL campaigner for telephone tax refusal, has two articles in the January Journal of Social Issues: one on "War Toys and the Peace Movement," and the other on "An Examination of Government-to-Government Aid and Its Unintended Consequences."

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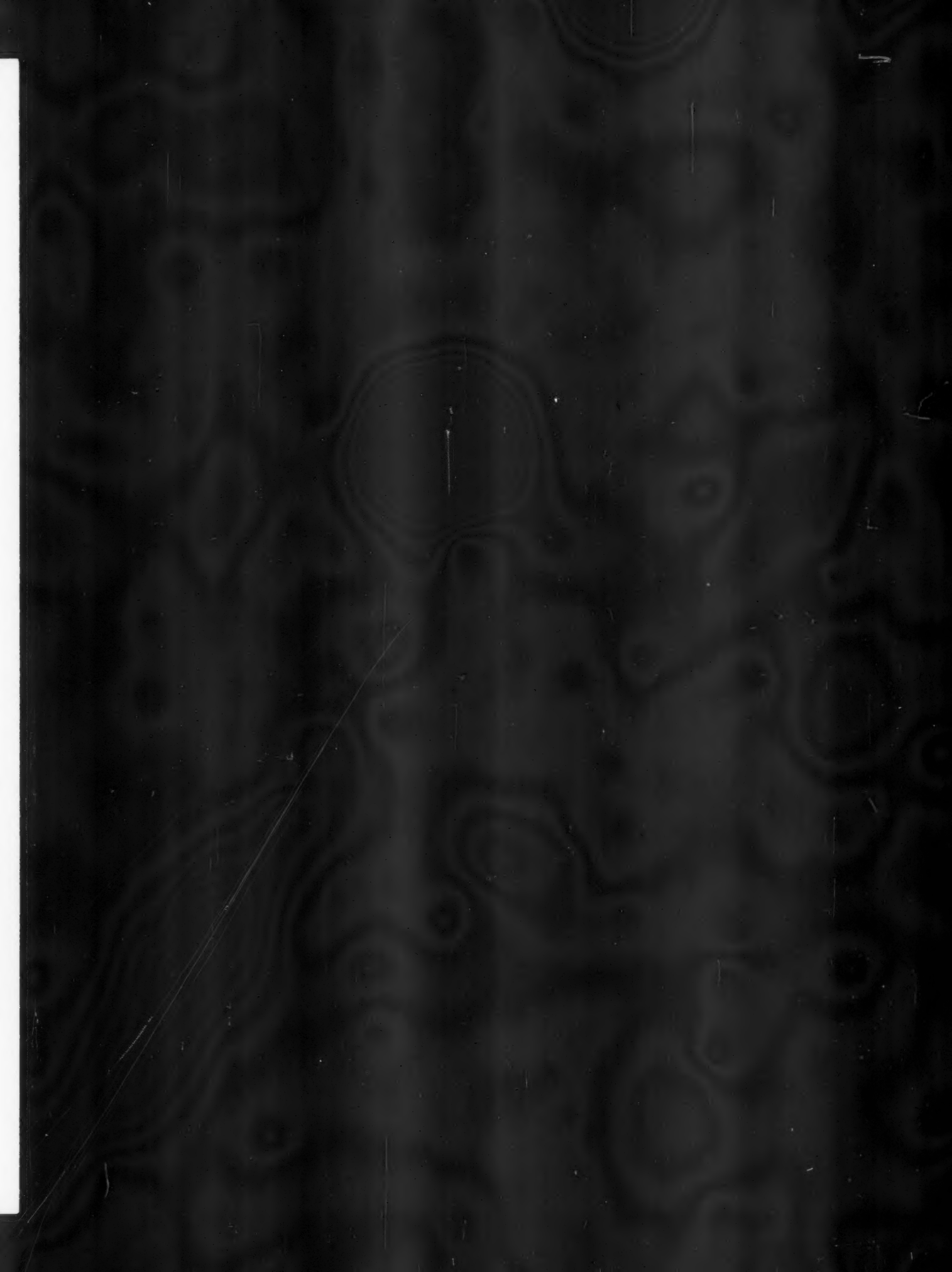
The recently formed northern Delaware chapter, mentioned in last issue, is putting out a mimeographed publication called "Dove."

PETER KIGER . . .

. . . WRL staff member and his sister, Gretchen, are flanked by supporting demonstrators on April 28 at the U.S. courthouse in Foley Square, New York. That was the date of Kiger's sentencing for having burned his draft card three years ago. A sentence of three months was imposed by Judge Frederick Van-Pelt Bryan.